

**PROCESS FOR ETCHING SILICON WAFERS**Abstract of the Disclosure

A process for etching silicon wafers using a caustic etchant in the form of an aqueous solution comprising water and a source of hydroxide ions and generally characterized by a lower concentration of water and/or higher concentration of source of hydroxide ions. In accordance with another embodiment, the caustic etchant includes a salt additive. The process produces silicon wafers with improved surface characteristics such as flatness and nanotopography.